

## Message Text

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73

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

/058 W

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R 101253Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8538

INFO AMEMBSSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBSSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL ANIV 6453

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, EG, JO

SUBJECT: POSSIBILITY OF ELECTIONS IN GAZA; WEST BANK ELECTIONS

REF: TEL AVIV 3136

1. IN COURSE OF CONVRSATON OCT 9 WITH SPECIAL ADVISOR TO MINISTER OF POLIC FOR ADMINISTERED AREAS(AVADIA DANON), EMBOFF INQUIRD ABOUT ISRAEL RADIO REPORT ON SEPT 24 TO EFFECT THAT ELECTIONS WERE TO BE HELD IN GAZA IN THE SPRING OF 1976.(FBIS TA 242036). EMBOFF NOTED THAT HE HAD SEEN NO NEWSPAPERS CONFIRMATION OF REPORT.

2. DANON SAID THAT RADIO REPORT HAD BEEN THE RESULT OF ERRONEOUS, AND ILL-TIMED, LEAK AFTER MEETING AT WHICH SUBJECT WAS DISCUSSED. HE EMPHASIZED THAT NO DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN, ALTHOUGH MATTER IS OBVIOUSLY UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION WITH A VIEW TOWARD KEEPING AHEAD OF ANTICIPATED DEMANDS FROM GAZANS THATELECTIONS BE HELD THERE CONCURRENTLY WITH MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ON WEST BANK SCHEDULED FOR NEXT SPRING. CONSENSUS WITHIN GOVERNMENT THUS FAR, HOWEVER, IS THAT PREMATURE SPECULATION WILL ONLY ENCOURAGE GAZANS  
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THEMSELVES TO BEGIN JOCKEYING FOR POSITION, THEREBY DECREASING

CHANCES FOR QUIET PREPARATIONS WHICH ISRAELIS FEEL ARE NECESSARY FOR ELECTION PROCESS TO RESUME IN GAZA.

3. DANON SAID FIRST STEP IN GAZA IN ANY CASE WOULD BE APPOINTMENT OF ARAB MAYOR FOR TOWN OF GAZA. HE CONFIDED THAT EVEN THIS WAS A PROBLEM SINCE, ALTHOUGH EX-MAYOR RASHAD SHAWWA SEEMED THE OBVIOUS CHOICE AND THE SHAWWA CLAN WAS EXPECTING HIM TO BE NAMED, ISRAELIS IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE SITUATION IN GAZA WERE AWARE THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE A POPULAR MOVE WITH MANY GAZA RESIDENTS. ( AMERICAN RESIDENT OF GAZA HAS CONFIRMED TO US THAT GAZANS ARE IN FACT ACTIVELY DISCUSSING PROSPECTS FOR ELECTIONS AND FOR APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR.)

4. RE WEST BANK MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, DANON CONFIRMED THAT NO DECISION HAD YET BEEN MADE CONCERNING POSSIBLE DEPARTURES FROM JORDANIAN ELECTORAL LAW( TEL AVIV 5843). HE DESCRIBED ISRAELI POSITIONS AS " THANKLESS". BASED ON HIS SOUNDINGS DECISION TO RETAIN RESTRICTIVE ASPECTS OF JORDANIAN LAW RE VOTER ELIGIBILITY WILL BE CRITICIZED AS REACTIONARY BY YOUNGER, MORE POLITICIZED, ELEMENTS OF WEST BANK POPULATION AS WELL AS BY ELEMENTS WHO DO NOT OWN LAND; ANY CHANGES FROM GOJ LAW WILL BE CRITICIZED IN PRINCIPLE BY MANY ARABS AS ILLEGAL BY OCCUPYING POWER.

5. DANON MENTIONED ONE ASPECT OF WEST BANK ELECTION PROBLEM WHICH WE HAD NOT HEARD BEFORE. ACCORDING TO HIM, MUSLIMS IN TOWNS WHICH HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN UNDER CHRISTIAN CONTROL( HE SPECIFIED BETHLEHEM AND RAMALLAH) ARE HOPEFUL THAT NON-LANDOWNERS WILL BE ALLOWED TO VOTE; CHRISTIANS ARE FEARFUL THAT SUCH CHANGE COULD PRODUCE MUSLIM MAJORITIES. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD HEARD THIS FEAR EXPRESSED MORE OFTEN SINCE BEGINNING OF LATEST ROUND OF FIGHTING IN LEBANON THAN BEFORE.

6. COMMENT: DANON, WHO IS EGYPTIAN-BORN AND CAME TO ISRAEL IN 1952, STRUCK US AS ONE OF MOST SENSITIVE ISRAELI OFFICIALS WE HAVE YET SPOKEN TO ON ISSUES CONCERNING OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. HE EXPLAINED LACK OF CONTACT WITH US EMBASSY IN PAST BY STATING THAT HE PREFERRED TO LEAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS TO CONFIDENTIAL

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MFA, BUT ENCOURAGED US TO REMAIN IN TOUCH AND OFFERED TO DISCUSS AT ANY TIME MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.  
TOON

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## Message Attributes

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